

Notices

Federal Register

Vol. 64, No. 9

Thursday, January 14, 1999

This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Office of the Secretary

[Docket No. 98-123-1]

Declaration of Emergency Because of Pseudorabies

Pseudorabies, a contagious, infectious, and communicable disease of livestock, primarily swine, is present in the United States. The disease, also known as Aujeszky's disease, mad itch, and infectious bulbar paralysis, is caused by a herpes virus. Pseudorabies does not affect humans.

In 1989 the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) launched a national pseudorabies eradication program in the United States. This pseudorabies eradication program, conducted in cooperation with the State governments and swine producers, involves the systematic identification of pseudorabies infected swine in the United States and the management of herds to eliminate sources of pseudorabies. By 1992, the program had identified nearly 8,000 swine herds as being infected. Steady progress towards eradication of Pseudorabies has been made since that time, and now only a little over 1,000 infected swine herds remained in the United States. By the end of the year 2000 pseudorabies should be completely eradicated from the United States.

Currently, swine prices in the United States are severely depressed. Not only are swine herd owners unable to sell their animals at a profit, they are actually losing money on these animals by continuing to feed and maintain them. Many of these owners are failing to vaccinate these devalued swine, since the cost of vaccinations cuts even further into the herd owner's financial resources. This poses a serious risk of spreading pseudorabies to additional premises and prolonging eradication efforts. This setback to the pseudorabies eradication program could not only be

economically damaging to the swine industry, but also would be costly for the Federal Government.

Therefore, APHIS has determined it is necessary to commence a voluntary accelerated pseudorabies eradication program in which the agency purchases and depopulates, as quickly as possible, as many pseudorabies infected herds at a considerable savings.

However, APHIS resources are insufficient to carry out this accelerated pseudorabies eradication program, therefore, additional funds are needed. These funds would be used for the following activities which are designed to eradicate pseudorabies in the United States well ahead of schedule: Contact swine herd owners in various States and purchase their infected herds from them at fair market value; remove and depopulate these infected herds on a voluntary basis; dispose of the swine carcasses; and conduct surveillance of surrounding herds to ensure that the disease has not spread beyond the infected herd that is being depopulated.

Therefore, in accordance with the provisions of the Act of September 25, 1981, 95 Stat. (7 U.S.C. 147b), I declare that there is an emergency that threatens the livestock industry of this country and hereby authorize the transfer and use of such funds as may be necessary from appropriations or other funds available to the agencies or corporations of the United States Department of Agriculture to commence a voluntary accelerated pseudorabies eradication program in the United States.

Effective Date: This declaration of emergency shall become effective January 7, 1999.

Dan Glickman,

Secretary of Agriculture.

[FR Doc. 99-800 Filed 1-13-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3410-34-M

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Commodity Credit Corporation

Notice and Request for Comment for Approval of a New Information Collection

AGENCY: Commodity Credit Corporation, USDA.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) is seeking approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to revise procedures for accepting vendor bids to supply commodities for use under domestic purchase programs. A Domestic Electronic Bid Entry System (DEBES) will provide for electronic submission of bids via the Internet. This will replace the current system, which requires hard-copy bids and manual entry into CCC's system. The new procedure will be more reliable and more efficient than the current procedure.

DATES: Comments on this notice must be received on or before March 15, 1999 to be assured consideration.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR COMMENTS: Contact Tim Mehl, Chief, Planning and Analysis Division, Kansas City Commodity Office (KCCO), 9200 Ward Parkway, Kansas City, Missouri 64114, telephone (816) 926-3536 or fax (816) 926-6767.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Domestic Electronic Bid Entry System (DEBES)—7 CFR 1496.

OMB Control Number: 0560-New

Type of Request: Approval of a new information collection.

Abstract: The Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) purchases agricultural commodities to meet domestic program needs. CCC issues invitations to purchase agricultural commodities at various times during the year. Vendors respond by making offers using the CCC Commodity Bid Form (form KC-327). CCC verifies that the KC-327 is responsive and manually enters the information on the form into the bid evaluation program to determine the lowest cost and award data for the creation of contracts. The current keypunching process requires entering data and then verifying the results. The sensitivity of the data and the high value of the contracts at stake requires a reliable and efficient system for capturing the bid data.

Regulations governing paperwork burdens on the public require that before an agency collects information from the public, the agency must receive approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). In accordance with those regulations, CCC is seeking approval for DEBES to provide for the submission of bids through the Internet. Under OMB regulations, comments